

Report to	North Wales Fire & Rescue Authority
Date	20 July 2026
Lead Officer	Anthony Jones – Assistant Chief Fire Officer
Contact Officer	Jonathan Blyde – Corporate Planning and Performance Manager
Subject	Annual Governance Statement 2025/26



PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1 To present to Members of the authority a draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS), as required by The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2 The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 requires the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority (the Authority) to publish an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to demonstrate that:
 - Business is conducted in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations;
 - Public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for; and
 - Resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively to achieve agreed priorities which benefit local people
- 3 The Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26 is set out in Appendix 1 and has been prepared in accordance with the principles set out in the CIPFA/Solace Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework (2016). The forward work programme for 2026/27 is contained within the draft Annual Government Statement.
- 4 The Annual Governance Statement will be published as part of the production of the statutory financial statements for 2025/26. An assessment will be made by the external auditor to confirm whether it is consistent with the financial statements and has been produced in line with the Framework.

OBSERVATIONS FROM AUDIT COMMITTEE

The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 was presented to the Audit Committee and Executive Panel on 15th June 2026. Members raised points seeking assurance on governance arrangements, management team capacity, safeguarding training, performance reporting, stakeholder engagement and project management capacity, particularly in relation to

the Training Centre. Officers confirmed that the governance structure had been reviewed and was operating effectively; vacancies remained for the DCFO and ACO roles; safeguarding arrangements were being strengthened through a dedicated Safeguarding Manager, mandatory training and committee oversight; performance reports were publicly available; and project management capacity was being developed through a dedicated Project Support Officer and evaluation of a permanent Project Manager role.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members:

- i) Note the final Annual Governance Statement, and:**
- ii) Agree the proposed actions for 2026/27**

BACKGROUND

- 4 Since 2010/11 all local government bodies have been required, by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, to prepare an AGS which is published as part of the Statutory Accounts.
- 5 The purpose of the AGS is to assess and demonstrate that there is a sound system of corporate governance throughout the organisation.

INFORMATION

- 6 In 2016, CIPFA and Solace published a new governance framework, Developing Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (the Framework). The Framework is structured around seven principles of governance which enables the Authority to demonstrate its overall arrangements and set out how it has discharged its responsibilities.
- 7 The purpose of the Annual Governance Statement is to set out the Authority's arrangements to ensure that:
 - business is conducted in accordance with all relevant laws and regulations.
 - public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for; and
 - resources are used economically, efficiently and effectively to achieve agreed priorities which benefit local people.
- 8 The Annual Governance Statement is reviewed by Audit Wales to confirm that it is consistent with its knowledge of the Authority and the financial statements.

- 9 Once published, performance against the forward work plan 2026/27 will monitored through the Service Leadership Teams' Performance Board on a quarterly basis.

IMPLICATIONS

Well-being Objectives	This report links to NWFRA's long-term well-being objectives and demonstrates the governance arrangements in place to enable the Service to provide emergency responses and prevention work well in to the future.
Budget	Na
Legal	Preparation and submission of the Annual Governance Statement to the Auditor General, is in compliance with The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014
Staffing	None
Equalities/Human Rights/ Welsh Language	Compliance with Equality Duty and Welsh Language Standards is explicitly referenced in the Statement.
Risks	A sound governance framework supports the Authority's risk management arrangements.